



Force Decides

Capital, Volume 1 has 33 chapters. After Chapters 1, 2 and 3, on Commodities, Exchange and Money, and after Chapters 4 and 5, on the general form of Capital, the remainder of the book is a continuous development of the concept of Surplus-Value.

There are two main interruptions to this steady tempo, however. One is the long Chapter 10, called “The Working Day”. We will divide this big chapter into two. Please find attached, or download, and read Parts 1 to 4 of Chapter 10 via the link given below.

Some notes on “The Working Day”

Marx ends the first section of the Chapter on “The Working Day” thus: ***“Between equal rights force decides.”***

In present-day “human rights” parlance, the opposite is held to be the case, but Marx is certainly correct. Capitalism is brutal. Equal “human” rights are a fiction in class-divided society.

“Between equal rights force decides. Hence is it that in the history of capitalist production, the determination of what is a working-day, presents itself as the result of a struggle, a struggle between collective capital, i.e., the class of capitalists, and collective labour, i.e., the working-class.”

In the second section, Marx generalises the concept of Surplus Labour to all class-divided societies, thus:

*“Capital has not invented surplus-labour. Wherever a part of society possesses the monopoly of the means of production, the labourer, free or not free, must add to the working-time necessary for his own maintenance an extra working-time in order to produce the means of subsistence for the owners of the means of production, [7] whether this proprietor be the Athenian ***** [well-to-do man], Etruscan theocrat, civis Romanus, Norman baron, American slave-owner, Wallachian Boyard, modern landlord or capitalist.”*

Section 3 turns back to the most capitalist country that Marx

knew, England, and tells stories of terrible horror having to do with people being worked to death, including the well-known story of Mary-Anne Walkley, 20 years of age when she died.

Section 4, called Day and Night Work, deals with the “relay system”, summed up as follows:

“The prolongation of the working-day beyond the limits of the natural day, into the night, only acts as a palliative. It quenches only in a slight degree the vampire thirst for the living blood of labour. To appropriate labour during all the 24 hours of the day is, therefore, the inherent tendency of capitalist production,” says Marx.

The vampire thirst of capital for the living blood of labour is still in evidence.

Illustration: The “Wobbly” (IWW) version of the poster originally called “The Czar’s Wedding Cake”.

- The above is to introduce the original reading-texts: [Capital V1, Chapter 10, The Working Day, parts 1 to 4](#).
- To download any of the CU courses in PDF files [please click here](#).